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MORNING BULLETIN

Secrets fund

A retired Air Force general whose job was to buy secrets from other nations goes to trial today on charges of misusing a secret \$450,000 Swiss bank account a decade ago. Maj. Gen. Richard B. Collins, 54, of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., is charged with six counts of embezzlement and faces up to 60 years in prison and \$60,000 in fines if convicted on all counts. Gen. Collins, who lives on a \$40,000 military pension, says the money in question was spent legitimately in Southeast Asia and elsewhere on secret CIA operations coordinated by his Air Force office.

Defense lawyer Stephen Bronis said his client had "an excellent shot" of acquittal in what he estimated would be a three-week trial in West Palm Beach. Prosecutor Morris Silverstein would not comment on the case. The case has been hindered by the secret nature of the bank account. At one point prosecutors talked about dropping the case rather than risking the publication of secret documents.

— John Elvin

This column includes staff and wire service reports.